

HOUSE No. 2649

By Ms. Fox of Boston, petition of Gloria L. Fox and others relative to the collection of health data regarding racial and ethnic groups. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

Gloria L. Fox	Frank I. Smizik
Dianne Wilkerson	Thomas M. Stanley
Byron Rushing	Benjamin Swan
Rachel Kaprielian	Kathleen M. Teahan
Matthew C. Patrick	Elizabeth A. Malia
J. James Marzilli, Jr.	Patricia D. Jehlen
John Keenan	

In the Year Two Thousand and Five.

AN ACT TO STANDARDIZE HEALTH DATA COLLECTION AND ASSESSMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. It is recognized by the commonwealth that signif-
2 icant disparities in health care and health status exist among racial
3 and ethnic groups. It is also recognized that these disparities result
4 in shortened life spans and lower quality of life for racial and
5 ethnic minorities. Whereas this disparate impact on the lives of
6 racial and ethnic minorities is unacceptable, the commonwealth
7 shall consider the elimination of racial and ethnic health dispari-
8 ties as among its foremost priorities. Consequently, the common-
9 wealth shall develop health data collection and assessment
10 guidelines to ensure that policy makers, public health officials,
11 health care providers and concerned citizens have access to accu-
12 rate, comprehensive and usable data on health care, health status
13 and health outcomes by race, ethnicity and primary language.

1 SECTION 2. The Department of Public Health (DPH) shall
2 develop and promulgate data collection guidelines for hospitals in
3 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts relative to race, ethnicity
4 and primary language of patients. DPH shall establish a training
5 curriculum for primary data collectors. Hospitals in the Common-
6 wealth of Massachusetts will be required to report patient treat-
7 ment and outcomes by race, ethnicity and primary language
8 annually to the Department of Public Health.

1 SECTION 3. Hospitals and clinics shall submit data collected
2 under the DPH guidelines to the Department of Public Health on
3 an annual basis.

1 SECTION 4. The Department of Public Health shall issue an
2 annual report based on the data received in accordance with
3 Section 2 and Section 3. This report shall address disparities in
4 health status and health care treatment by race, ethnicity and pri-
5 mary language.

1 SECTION 5. Subject to appropriation, the legislature shall allo-
2 cate necessary funding to the department of public health for the
3 purpose of effectively implementing this act.